

It stands to reason that unused brains cost more



America's Heartland
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situation that made you feel silly? I wonder if the disciples felt that way the day they suggested that Jesus send a huge crowd of hungry people back into town so they could get food. "As evening approached, the disciples came to Jesus and said, 'This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.' "Jesus replied, 'They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.' "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,' they answered. 'Bring them here to me,' Jesus said. And He directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, He gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children" (Matthew 14:15-21).

On that day, the disciples received yet another epiphany that Jesus, as God, could do anything He chooses to do, including feeding a multitude of people with two fish so small that a self-respecting bass angler might have tossed back into the water?

It's not just the disciples who can underestimate Jesus. People today do the same thing, thinking that He couldn't possibly be interested in the situations they're facing. Yet, Jesus made clear he is vitally interested in whatever we're facing and that He stands ready to intervene if we only ask.

"I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:12-13).

So, if you think Jesus isn't interested in your situation, perhaps you might be a candidate for a brain transplant.

Roger Alford offers words of encouragement to residents of America's heartland. Reach him at rogeralford1@gmail.com.

Someone sent along the old joke about the fellow who volunteered for the first-ever brain transplant. The surgeon offered him a couple of options: the brain of a NASA scientist for \$10,000, or one from a politician for \$50,000. The fellow asked why the politician's brain cost so much more. "Because it has never been used," the surgeon replied. Did you ever have one of those days when you felt like you could benefit from a brain transplant? One of those days when you run headlong into a

Sleep, where are thou?



Times Remembered
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he is huge. No wonder, he and the opossum eat all the scraps I put out. We cut a couple of hollow trees in the back of the house to build our sun room that became the raccoon's den. One day the raccoon babies came up to the deck to visit. I didn't dare touch them because they would tear your fingers off. I've also heard and seen owls at the back of the house. At sunrise, birds visit our feeders. I enjoy watching all the different ones that visit, such as: Yellow Finches, Cardinals, Chickadees, Titmice, House Sparrows and ground feeders like the Blue Jays, Black-eyed Juncos, and Doves. Red-tailed hawks and owls are plentiful too. We have Barr Owls, Hoot Owls and Screech Owls. I threw out some apples left over from Christmas for the deer too. Sunrise is a beautiful thing ... its bright yellow-orange rays flicker brightly over the eastern horizon in the sun room windows. The rays give me hope of the coming day. What a miracle to see. I am so thankful that I can see the gorgeous sunrise. Even though I have pain, I think of so many people who are experiencing more excruciating pain of cancer, and diseases that are incurable like ALS and MS. And those that are blind or deaf who can't see how beautiful the sunrises are. We can look around and always see people that are in much worse pain than ourselves.

When I can't sleep at night, I go downstairs from bed to bed and from couch to recliner, trying to find a comfortable place to sleep. Since I'm older, I do not sleep well at night, I experience so much pain from my hip and back. I do have arthritis in my hip and back according to my MRI. I pray in the quietness of the night for relief and read my bible.

The first sign of arthritis is often a twinge in your knee or your back or stiffness at the base of the thumb. Or maybe you are getting out of the car and a sharp pain shoots down your leg from your hip to your calf. You tell yourself, "I have just strained something, I'm too young to have arthritis."

A few weeks ago, when we had those huge full moons; I could see clearly outside the sun room windows. It was like daytime and so beautiful. God's creations are magnificent. Since we've had snow on the ground, the woods around our house are illuminated at night. I keep looking for the Bobcat we saw a few years ago; but he hasn't appeared. I saw a raccoon as big as a pig;



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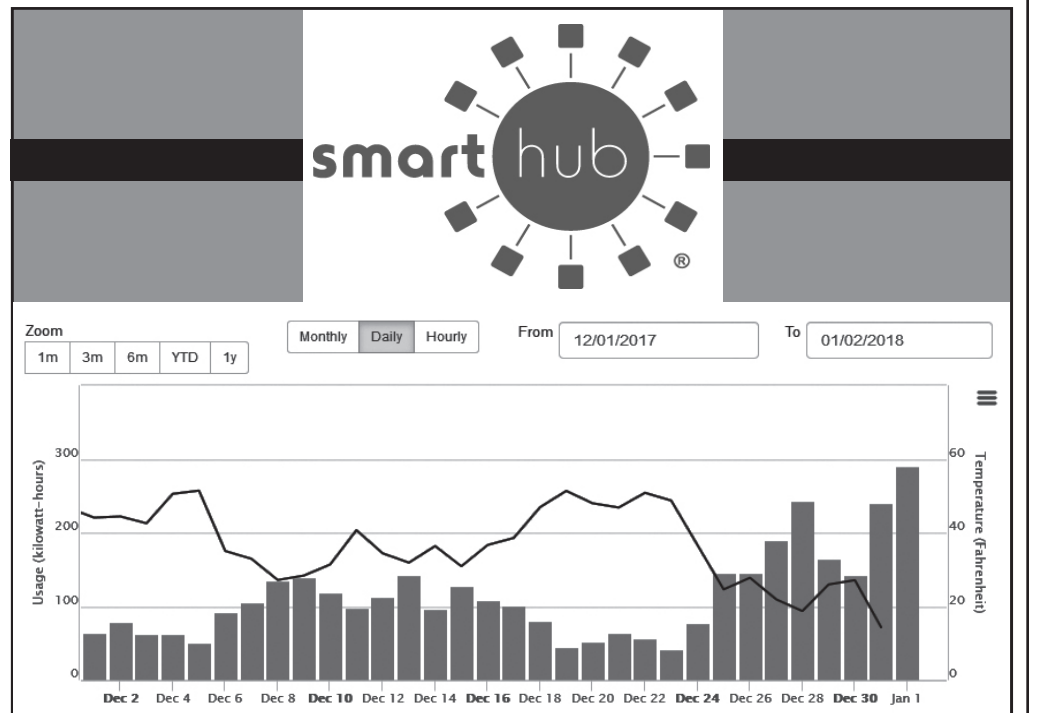
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